

"THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS"

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Summer 2015

DR. WALTER F. SCHARTNER SUPERINTENDENT OF SAYVILLE SCHOOLS

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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TIDINGS FROM THE SAYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT



CLASS OF 2015 "Lucky to Have Each Other"

As luck would have it, the Commencement for Class of 2015 was held outdoors beneath cloudy skies on June 27th. Some may have felt it dampened the festivities, but compared to other years under the scorching sun, there was much good fortune in the unusually cool weather, the steady "wind off the sea," and the threat of rain that ensured the graduation ended in a timely fashion.

Despite the troubled forecast, Sayville's tradition held. Sayville Administrators and Board of Education members led the processional as the High School Band played the march. Excited shouts, encouraging applause, and shrill whistles greeted the 278 graduates in gold or purple robes as they crossed the green lawn behind the high school, stepped onto the red track, and headed to their seats on the football field. Followed by Teachers Who Made A Difference and more than 100 Alumni (one returning Alumnus was from 1938), who participated in the Annual Alumni Walk, the respectful graduates commemorated their last few hours as Sayville students with dignity.

Superintendent Dr. Walter Schartner greeted the graduates. With wisdom and wit, the speeches by Salutatorian Nick Cowan and Valedictorian Shreeya Panigrahi (read by Mr. Lecci as Shreeya observed from Russia via a video call on her parent's cellphone) shared insights; musical interludes were performed; and Board President John Verdone offered his congratulations (see pages 2-4). As the last diplomas were being awarded, a few droplets fell from the sky. Luckily, the light sprinkle abated during the clever Response for the Class by Class President Tyler Merkle, but the potential prompted Senator Chuck Schumer to tear up his planned speech. Principal Ronald Hoffer abbreviated his closing remarks, even wished everyone God Bless America in lieu of the Jazz Choir's traditional last song, and quickly wished the Class of 2015 the best of luck. Immediately, a cloudburst of purple and gold mortarboards showered down from the sky while the spectators cheered and clapped like thunder.

Check online for photos & list of names ALUMNI WALKING



MUSICAL Interludes

Following the processional, played by the Sayville High School Band (below), directed by Mr. Andy Giammalvo, Senior members of the High School Jazz Choir (left)—Jake Vail, Alex Sneddon, Alyssa Lofaro, Clare O'Connor, Meghan Gunther, Brian Walsh, and Timothy Costorf—sang The Star-Spangled Banner.

In a special tribute to her unforgettable choral teacher Mrs. Betsy Cohen (as well as for her mother, and classmates), Meghan Gunther (right), The Patricia Ann Kubelle Memorial Award-Winning vocalist, gave a splendid performance of a sentimental favorite, For Good (Wicked), that brought tears to many eyes and drew tremendous applause, Mr. Hoffer remarked, "I think they're going to have to retitle that ... 'For GREAT,' because that was unbelievably great and awesome." (To see the video of Commencement, including Meghan's performance, go to sayvilleschools.org/TIDINGS ONLINE.)



(right) Sayville Superintendent Dr. Walter Schartner marched with Principal Ron Hoffer, Assistant Superintendent for Business John J. Belmonte, Special Education Director Peter Branscombe, B.O.E. President John Verdone, Vice President Thomas Cooley, trustees Keith Kolar, Norm deVenau, Maureen Dolan while Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Dr. John Stimmel welcomed the Alumni.





*Superintendent of Sayville Schools Dr. Walter F. Schartner greeted members of the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, staff, distinguished guests, alumni, parents, grandparents, extended families, and “To the Sayville High School Class of 2015, thank you for establishing a new standard of achievement for other classes to emulate. You have added to the excellence that is the Sayville Public Schools.”*

“ Sayville High School has been designated a REWARD SCHOOL, the highest designation for a school in New York State for four consecutive years. We received a grant for two years to mentor faculty and staff of focus schools around the State. This is possible because of the high school community’s success. This success is directly related to the success and hard work of our students with the support of the teachers, administrators, and families.

*[During his brief address, Dr. Schartner cited lines from his favorite author (Dr. Seuss) and lines from his favorite book (Oh, the Places You’ll Go) to highlight the graduates’ next step.]*

Goals are dynamic but with purpose. If you focus on that purpose you will keep flying

and avoid the prickly perch. Stay connected with your teachers and your school. Your input is always welcome. We are always looking for ways to teach our students to fly farther and faster while avoiding the hang-ups and bang-ups.

To the Class of 2015, as you leave this ceremony this morning, on the path to your personal future, you have become a part of a great tradition, which is Sayville High School Alumni. Buildings and people change—but that tradition of excellence will remain our goal for as long as the Sayville High School is the center of pride for this community. Just ask the many alumni that have chosen to share your day by marching into the graduation.

Remember all that have played a part in your achievement—parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators and this entire community. Remember that you have the power to do great and different things. You have the power to change the course of history through goodness, kindness, and intelligent decision making.

As you reflect on your educational journey at Sayville Public Schools, take the advice of Dr. Seuss. “Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened.”

We are proud of each and every one of you, and we share your happiness this morning. Good luck and may God bless you in all that you do!



**CLASS OF 2015 VALEDICTORIAN**

**SHREEYA PANIGRAHI**

**“KEEPING THE FAITH”**

*Unable to deliver her own speech because she was on a full, U.S. State Department scholarship to study in Russia, Shreeya asked her Social Studies Teacher Mr. James Lecci to read her address, which he did splendidly, while Mrs. Brown held up (and hid behind) Shreeya’s portrait.*

*[Shreeya invited her classmates to remember milestone years, 2002, 2008, and all the cultural associations that were part of their growing-up process.]*



“ ...However, as great as the past was, we need to remember that it was just as flawed as today’s world; we just didn’t know it. ...This past that, whether we like it or not, was full of things that we’d like to forget... America’s preparation for war in 2002 or the beginning of the Great Recession in 2008, or on a less serious note, the use of dial-up Internet and flip-phones.... As Billy Joel once said, “The good old days weren’t always good.”

Now, 2015, what do you think about? Some of you may first think...we’re graduating and taking the next step, whatever that step may be. Others may think about the tense political climate in which we live among many other cold realities, such as the current drought in California. However, 2015 isn’t quite finished, and many good things have already occurred. Both *Parks & Recreation* and *David Letterman* ended ...with a bang; we now have various women and people of color being considered as serious presidential candidates by both major political parties, and we still have much more to look forward to, like the upcoming sequel to one of our favorite school novels, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Evidently, today’s society is just as complex... as it was ten, twenty, thirty years ago. So the next time you hear someone bemoan the state of society and explain how everything was so wonderful during their time, I suggest saying something along the lines of... “Today’s world is good and bad, just as it’s always been; just as it always will be.” It’s really as simple as that.

However, the buck does not stop there. We have already acknowledged the constant, complex state of society. Now here’s the fun part. Let’s continue to view the past and enjoy what we can, whether it be by watching *The Breakfast Club*, listening to *The Beatles*, or by watching clips of the *Dream Team* on YouTube. Moreover, let us ensure that we learn from the mistakes made in the past, so that we can create a better present and future. The most important thing is that we are not blind and do not get hung up on a time that no longer exists.

Instead, we need to focus on the present because that is all we have, and we cannot waste this time and everything that it has to offer us. ...we need to simply appreciate each day for what is, even on the days where we have a million things due yesterday that need to be completed. Because at the end of the day, we will never get that time back. This will be especially relevant as we approach the next four years of our lives and find our time split up by other people...midterms and finals weeks. While we cannot change college calendars and the responsibilities that will always face us, let us enjoy the present by controlling our own time and preventing ourselves from being consumed by these markers.

Additionally, we should do more to appreciate



all of the resources that we have now because many others could have only dreamed of having what we do. Plus, something better generally does come along. The most prominent example ... the Internet. That I could take my phone out right now, ask any question, and get an answer within milliseconds is incredible. Yes, technology is not perfect, but it’s pretty spectacular. Let’s not dismiss this amazing time of innovation that we’re in by consistently longing for the past.

Earlier in this speech, I referenced Billy Joel, who once said that “the good old days weren’t always good.” However, I neglected to mention the other half of that lyric from his song, “Keeping the Faith,” where he sings: “And tomorrow ain’t as bad as it seems.” So, let’s continue to enjoy the present and view the future with the same positivity in which we often view the past. Thank you, and congratulations, Class of 2015!



EXCERPTS ABOVE. VISIT SAYVILLESCHOOLS.ORG/TIDINGS ONLINE FOR SHREEYA’S FULL SPEECH.

After acknowledging Sayville High School administrators, faculty, staff, alumni, family, and friends, Nick Cowan greeted his classmates:

“ Good morning to the class of 2015. If you have not realized yet, we made it. Before I begin I would like to once again thank all those going off to serve our country in a branch of our armed forces, so a round of applause for them. I would like also to acknowledge anyone who asked for a shout out, I left a blank space with the words “insert name here” in my speech just for you, so consider yourselves recognized.

Now, I must admit that I have been planning this speech for the past four years. Both of my brothers, who are here today, each stood at this same podium and gave his own speech, so you can imagine there are a number of expectations on me today. I have to be inspirational but not cliché, profound but not boring, and funny but not awkward. Most of all, I need to fulfill the two basic requirements of a great commencement speech: to tell you how bright your future is and to explain to you the importance of failure along the way, usually with some mention of Dr. Seuss thrown in for good measure. And can I also recognize before I begin how ironic this is right now that I am Salutatorian, most known for my academics, never played a single sport in my life; yet, perhaps my most memorable moment will take place here on the hallowed football field? Anyway, I've decided to talk to you all about something between the extremes of success and failure, a little something I like to call uncertainty.

...imagine your younger selves when you were entering your first day of kindergarten....I'm sure you all had some anxiety and uncertainty...as you looked around the room, clutching your favorite *webkinz* stuffed animal tightly to your chest, and realized that you didn't know anyone. I mean, it is hard enough to care for a *Tamagotchi*, let alone try to make real human friends.

...fast-forward a few years to middle school....It is not until you reach high school when you recognize how messed up those few years were, and of course how ABSOLUTELY UNLUCKY our class was. If you went to Sunrise, your fifth-grade trip consisted of sitting on a boat that never left the dock; maybe you still hold some grudges for missing out on *Medieval Times*, having it pour every day at Frost Valley, or getting lost in the woods for many hours on a waterfall hike *with Dr. Schartner*; and although our Physics Trip was planned twice, we never actually made it to *Six Flags*. But then again, we did miss out on midterms twice, so I guess that kind of makes up for it.

What can be said about high school? It was four of the most challenging years of our lives, and contrary to popular belief,



there were no flash mobs of people singing on tables at lunch like in *High School Musical*. ...and although you may only know of one, in the past 17 or 18 years, we have survived upwards of 27 predicted apocalypses. There were many times during these years when we couldn't be happier and there were times, like after the losses of one of our truly great friends and a teacher we loved and respected, when we thought that things simply could not get any worse. Now, flash-forward one more time and find yourselves sitting in a sea of purple and gold all together on a football field listening to some speech at your high school graduation....

...But now we are entering the next stage of our lives: the post high school world of college, work, or service. And I'm sure the number one thing on our minds is: what happens next? Where do I go from here? And this is where the uncertainty comes into play because I honestly don't know.

People tell us our whole lives we need a plan. For most of us, that plan is to go to college, to graduate, to find a stable job and to work until we can retire. Well, I'm here to tell you that this perfect linear plan is unrealistic, and to be honest, stupid. About 80% of students in the U.S. change their major at least once. On average, college students change their major at least three times over the course of their college career. Moreover, the average worker currently holds ten different jobs before the age forty, and even this number is expected to increase.

But, many people will tell us that if we don't have a plan, we will never accomplish our goals. But what if our goals are more generalized and intangible? To be happy, to laugh every day, to experience love...and loss, to feel alive. Where do we go with goals like that? There is no course in college called *Intro to Happiness*. You can't major in laughter. This idea was best emphasized by the famous singer John Lennon when he said: "When I was 5 years old, my mother always told me that happiness was the key to life. When I went to school, they asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down 'happy.' They told me I didn't understand the assignment. I told them they didn't understand life."

People correlate being uncertain with something bad: fear is bad, failure is bad, uncertainty is bad. But it's not...it's life. We fear the unknown more than anything else and we are about to step into one of life's biggest unknowns: taking charge of our lives and choosing the path we will go down toward our future. I must say that the lessons we were taught this year did not make this future seem very promising. In economics, we were taught that we are entering a world of unemployment and recession where our jobs will be outsourced or replaced by technology and our skills will be outdated before we can even use them; in government we were taught how our politics are corrupt and divisively partisan; and if you took environmental science, we were taught how our

planet, as a whole, is dying. There are more problems we need to face today than ever before, and we are the solution.

However, I am not sending you out today with the goals of finding the cure for cancer or ending all wars. That would be great, but I am sending you out with simple goals to be happy, to laugh, to love, to live, because if we all knew how to be happy with ourselves, if we could always find a reason to laugh even during the worst times, if we could learn to love and live with everyone, and if we would always stand up for what we knew was right, there would be no need for wars, suffering, and unhappiness. I have already seen a spark in our generation, even personally myself; it is a spark of acceptance, a spark of love, a spark of knowing what is right and how to counter what is wrong. I ask of you all today, as you enter this world of uncertainty and the unknown, trying to determine that unique path towards your future successes, do not lose that spark.

So, to the class of 2015, here is my #1 piece of advice: don't worry about what life has in store for you: you can't control where the cards fall, so be happy.... Be happy where you are and who you are, right now. For example, you are right now sitting in the dark and windy day hoping for me to stop talking and, I'll admit, in a few years you won't remember what I said, heck I won't even remember...but we will always remember how we FELT, so soak it in.

My second most important piece of advice is to be grateful for our friends, our family, the people who helped us get to this point, the people we love and don't want to ever be without, because these are the people who will be riding the rollercoaster of life with us. Life is a work in progress, so if you ever come to those two roads which diverge in a yellow wood uncertain of which to take, consider them both, but be sure not to choose based on which seems to have been trodden more black. Instead choose based on the aspects of the path itself: the light spots, the dark spots, the twists and turns, and the uncertainty of where it leads, and never forget that life will constantly make more twists, more turns, and an infinite number of paths to take. That will make all the difference. Congratulations, Class of 2015, thank you for your time, and don't forget to stay poised!



Before announcing the Board of Education President, Principal Hoffer welcomed the Alumni, representing the graduating classes from our high school from 1938 through 2014. "As alumni, your attendance is greatly appreciated and it clearly reflects your pride, your enthusiasm, and your respect for your educational experience in our district. We thank you for joining us this morning, and we encourage you to join us each and every year at this ceremony."

## BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT JOHN VERDONE



...Class of 2015, this is a great day, although it may be overcast, the future may soon be clear and the wind may be behind your back soon.

I thank the community for giving me the opportunity to speak to the Sayville Class of 2015. Didn't we just see you guys in Kindergarten? Where did the time go? ...I have to admit, I'm a bit jealous. Oh, to be

young again, to have the opportunity to lead, to solve, to cure, to change the things that need to be changed.

From your first day of Kindergarten you started building a foundation of learning. Today's the day you will set the cornerstone. And it's now up to you to continue to build on that structure. The door is open, and I wish you much success in the future. Find your purpose and be true to yourselves... as I stand here a proud parent of a son who served in the United States military, I thank

the five students amongst you who will leave our safe harbor to protect our freedoms that we so value every day. Thank you. You make Sayville proud. God speed to each and every one of you. ...[From the Class of 2015], I do have one favor to ask of you: whatever road you take, whatever path you're on, find the time for family, friends. Live, love, and always find time to laugh. On behalf of the Sayville Board of Education, congratulations to each and every one of you.



## CLASS OF 2015 PRESIDENT TYLER MERKLE

## "UNLUCKY?"

EXCERPTS BELOW. VISIT SAYVILLESCHOOLS.ORG/TIDINGS ONLINE FOR TYLER'S FULL SPEECH, PHOTOS, AND VIDEO COVERAGE.



After greeting everyone present, Class President Tyler Merkle congratulated his fellow graduates in the **Response for the Class of 2015:**

...we are proud and ready to shed our reputation as the *unluckiest* class in Sayville history.

**Unlucky?** It has been said by many of us that we are one of the unluckiest classes that Sayville has ever seen. When I first heard this I believed it to be a ridiculous accusation. But after thinking it through, I have to admit there is some truth behind the statement.

We entered Sixth grade right at the beginning of the 2008 recession. As a result, the school canceled our Medieval Times trip. Luckily, the school planned an alternative trip that entailed a movie at the Sayville Movie Theater. Gee! What fun it is to go to a place where your feet stick to the ground.

Our personal black cloud followed us to Frost Valley where it rained for *four straight* days. That didn't stop our hikes and activities. Unfortunately, it didn't stop the bed-bugs either.

Furthermore, we were lucky enough to see our elementary schools receive the additions and new libraries they deserved. But as our luck would have it, we were too long gone to have been able to make use of them. And now what's this I'm hearing about a turf field?

Our freshman homecoming? **Rained out.**

Our sophomore midterms: **Hurricaned out.**

Our Junior float: **Fell apart.**

But I don't want us to leave here today, for the last time, without thinking about ways we have been truly blessed. The danger of having this "unlucky" reputation is that we overlook our good fortune. For instance, we have been privileged to have had two amazing women to help get us through these four years of high school. Despite her height, Mrs. Perlin was always there to tackle

every issue, no matter how big. Mrs. Perlin was not alone. Mrs. VanDorn was not only our advisor, but kept us organized and headed in the right direction. Not many high school classes can say they had their prom in an Aquarium.

Despite the stress of being advisors to a class that was sometimes unorganized, unmotivated and just, well, unlucky, Mrs. VanDorn and Mrs. Perlin were always able to keep their cool and their school spirit. Without them, our high school experience would not have been as fun and exciting as it was, so on behalf of our entire class, thank you....they were not the only faculty members who made our four years the best they could be. [Tyler named Mrs. Whittman—*tough as nails exterior, yet soft as cotton candy interior*—*Sass-Master Mr. Nani for teaching a second language...* Mrs. Murfit *always there in 10th periods to give extra help.*] ...these are only some of the great faculty members

...In a place where it feels like we're judged and valued solely on our grades, the staff here helped us realize that we are more than just a number, but unique human beings. Many of us took the opportunity to thank our teachers from the past 13 years by naming them *Teachers Who Made a Difference*. I would encourage all of us to realize the good fortune we have had at this school by taking a minute to acknowledge the teachers and staff members who got us here today. For some of us, their job was not so easy.

I would be remiss if I did not mention two classmates who are not here with us this morning. We are lucky to have the example of resilience and strength that we have in Phil Maehr, and we look forward to sharing high school stories with him at many, many future reunions.

We were all very lucky to know Joseph Visone. I think we can all agree that even though he is not physically here with us, his spirit will always be very much a part of the Class of '15.

...you have the honor of graduating from one of the best high schools on Long Island.... As a result of this luck, some of you will go off and do incredible things such as become CEOs, travel the world, or just move down the street from where you grew up and produce the future graduates of Sayville High School....it seems like just yesterday we were sitting in planetarium class where we would have to superglue our eyes open just to say awake....once we got to the high school, the superglue was no longer needed. Our eyes began to open to new perspectives and experiences...being subjected to new experiences was scary, the wonderful faculty here at Sayville High School made everything a lot easier for us.

But all jokes aside, we are lucky to have each other. We have been through a lot together and our share of bad luck has made us closer.... Although we are known as the "unluckiest class," let's become the "most successful class" this district has ever seen!

...as a class, we have learned that no amount of bad luck can stop us if we lean on each other. Before I finish my speech I would like to quote one of my favorite movies, **Now and Then:**

*"Things will happen in your life that you can't stop but that's no reason to shut out the world."*

Dream big, make every second count, and follow your heart. Thank you for the best four years of my life! And congratulations Class of 2015, we did it!

[To preserve the moment, Tyler immediately turned and took a selfie with the Class of 2015.]



# PRAISE FOR THE CLASS OF 2015 "OUTSTANDING IN ALL ENDEAVORS"

After a moment of silence for Joey Visone, joined by prayerful wishes for Philip Maehr, High School Principal Ron Hoffer closed the ceremony early, due to threats of rain, before listing the class statistics and achievements (see below):



- The graduates met and/or exceeded the academic standards: **96%** of the students in the Class of 2015 will go on to further education; **97%** will have earned a Regents Diploma this year.

- At the **41st Annual Scholastic Awards Program**, **84** deserving students received **114** awards. These recipients wore gold- or purple-ribbon medallions at graduation.

- So far, **141** students have received **academic, university, or community scholarships that value well over 4.3 million dollars.** (The amount includes \$117,000 in scholarships and awards from local community organizations.) This list is incomplete since notification of more scholarships continue throughout the summer.

- **Kyle Bianco, Drake Davison, Patrick Fitzgerald, Jamie Mas, and Jessica Reilly** were recognized for their **anticipated U.S. military service.**

- Our **Visual Arts** seniors had a tremendous year: **Shannon Bohman, Ryan Fargione, Alyssa Klassert, and Samantha Stokes** participated in and won multiple competitions and/or scholarships.

- In our **Music Program**, four **NYSSMA All-State musicians**— **Timothy Costorf, Meghan Gunther, Matthew McGrath,** and

**Alex Sneddon**—were recognized locally, throughout the county, state, and nation. Congratulations to all of our award-winning performing groups and musicians.

- In our **Theatre Arts Program**, our seniors participated in *You Can't Take It with You*, *The Effect of Gamma Rays on a Man in the Moon Marigold*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and seven seniors produced and directed in the "37th Annual One-Act Plays." Five seniors earned the **U.S. Achievement Academy Award**, and five others were inducted into the **Sayville Players Honour Troupe 2015.**

- In the arena of Interscholastic Athletics, **18 of 26 varsity teams were Scholar-Athlete Teams.** The following teams won **LEAGUE or DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIPS:**

**BOYS: Swimming and Diving, Golf, Football;**

**GIRLS: Golf, and Softball;**

**SUFFOLK COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS: BOYS: Football**

- **High School Service Organizations** have, once again, served our community by giving back to our community and other local, national, and worldwide communities. Congratulations to all of our service organizations for your commitment in addressing the needs of others throughout our local and global communities!



# Moving-Up

During the three Elementary Fifth-grade Moving-Up ceremonies, there were words of encouragement and welcome from Middle School Principal Thomas Murray along with wonderful awards, student, staff and parent recognition, as well as musical performances by the talented students. Each ceremony was followed by refreshments provided by the PTAs.

*"It Was All About the Lockers (No Recess)"* (See Sayville School District website for full story and more photos.)

## Lincoln Avenue

Once Lincoln Avenue's most "well-mannered" class processed into the auditorium for their 2015 Moving-Up Ceremony, Principal Dr. Michele LeBlanc welcomed them, their families, and the District Administrators in attendance. BOE President John Verdone (a former Lincoln parent) made an appearance and shared a few words, Principal Tom Murray offered assurances about Middle School, and Dr. LeBlanc acknowledged the "graduating" Lincoln parents for their six years of support. She also thanked the special PTA, SEPTA, and Site-Based Team volunteers for their countless hours of service.

During her address, Dr. LeBlanc cited Henry Ford's quote on enthusiasm [see insert] to best describe the amazing class. "It is hard to miss the enthusiasm within this group: the sparkle, the swing, the will, and the energy. You will see it this morning," Dr. LeBlanc also noted how the spirit of cooperation within this class, (another of Ford's favorite subjects), has enabled these Fifth graders to work together "within and outside the classroom. This is a group that is highly willing to serve others, and they thoroughly enjoyed that role." Dr. LeBlanc attributed the successes this class has seen to "their energy and will combined with their ability



to work together. There is a maturity within the group that for me adds sparkle and swing to the ceremony and I feel this class is prepared..." In thinking about this very special group of talented children, Dr. LeBlanc concluded with another

quote from Mr. Ford; *"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success. You would make Henry Ford so proud as you have me. Congratulations, students. Congratulations, parents."*

Representing each Fifth-grade class, three students (Eva Kosak, William Kretz, Madison Galaris) read their insightful essays about their years at Lincoln, and all the students performed two songs: the traditional *For Just a Little While*, and this year's hit that was cleverly and appropriately paraphrased *All About the Lockers* (lyrics rewritten by Sayville Music teachers Christine Cirillo and Kristi Woerner



to the music of *All About the Bass* regarding lockers at the Middle School.

(left) New York State Comptroller • Daniel O'Doherty, Keira Collins

## Cherry Avenue



Cherry Avenue's Principal, Dr. Lisa Ihne, welcomed everyone to the Moving-Up ceremony and acknowledged that this special day marked a new chapter for the bright, eager Fifth graders "who are well-prepared for the next phase of their education. "It has been a privilege to know the students and serve as their principal," Dr. Ihne continued. "I have really enjoyed getting to know each and every one of the students, and I must admit that they're one of the most special Fifth-grade groups I have ever met. As much as we would like to keep them longer, it is time for them to move on to the Middle School."

Thanking the parents for sharing their children with the Cherry Avenue community, Dr. Ihne encouraged the students, even as they became teenagers, to keep communication open with their parents—"your two best friends"—who "will always be there regardless of the situation." With the announcement: "Fifth graders, congratulations! We are proud of you. You will be missed," Dr. Ihne presented them to Middle School Principal Mr. Thomas Murray, who assured the incoming Sixth graders they will enjoy the Middle School experience. This was followed by the presentation of the special awards and Moving-Up Certificates.

During the processional, the Fifth graders had done a curious thing. Each dropped one object into an empty black storage box resting at the base of the center podium, before taking his or her seats. Eventually, the box was brimming with sports equipment: basketballs, footballs, soccer balls, softballs, hand balls, frisbees, even jump ropes.



Cherry Ave. continues on page 7.

### List of Fifth-grade 2014-2015 Presidential Academic, Physical Fitness, and other Award Winners

#### Lincoln Avenue

- ACADEMIC GOLD AWARDS**  
Annie Bench  
Elizabeth Bossert  
Jose Jaimes  
William Kretz  
Rylie Mullaney  
Gianna Racanelli  
Olivia Reiss  
Shayla Smith
- SILVER AWARDS**  
Mark Broome  
Brianna Bunting

- Keira Collins  
Zhora Dominguez  
Cate Doxsee  
Connor Dubay  
Isabella Graziano  
Christopher McCabe  
Eric McFadden  
Jade Morello  
Isabelle Smith

- FITNESS AWARD GOLD**  
Elizabeth Bossert  
Brianna Bunting  
Liam Busch  
Anthony Capuano  
Molly Clark  
Mackenzie Doller

- Zhora Dominguez  
Cate Doxsee  
Brooke Dubay  
Isabella Graziano  
Matthew Bonfanti  
Eric McFadden  
Jade Morello  
Rylie Mullaney  
Daniel O'Doherty  
Rebekah Osik  
Vincent Palumbo  
Kathryn Schroeder  
Isabelle Smith  
Shayla Smith  
Tristan Stokes  
Ava Walsh

- SILVER**  
Grace Allgauer  
Emma Ball  
Annie Bench  
Matthew Bonfanti  
Alexandra Bostinto  
Mark Broome  
Gwen Brown  
Brooke Burke  
Jeremy Chiusano  
Tom Cea  
Keira Collins  
Sarah Dooley  
Holly Doxey  
Connor Dubay  
Madison Galaris

- Olkans Gilbert  
Colin Gover  
Aidan Keane  
Eva Kosak  
Katrina Kranzle  
Thomas Liguori  
Erin O'Donnell  
Andrew Person  
Olivia Reiss  
Swati Sheth  
Serada Traylor  
Sam Verdone  
Daniel Weber  
Lindsay Whitbread  
Katelyn Zito



(above) Triple "C" • Elizabeth Bossert, William Kretz

(below)  
County Legislature  
Presiding Officer •  
Isabella Graziano



#### Cherry Avenue

- ACADEMIC GOLD AWARDS**  
Michael Argenziano  
Christina Arlotta  
John Corcoran  
John Greves  
Anthoula Paloubis  
Sophia Sanchez  
Cesar Cortes  
Patrick Folks  
Maggie Mongiello  
William Streek

- Natasha Yajadda  
Chad Moccio  
Angelina Sagginario  
Gene Weng  
**SILVER AWARDS**  
Kenneth Corrao  
Thomas Marino  
Gabriela Meza  
Sarah Newman  
Miles Cataldo  
Juliet Wessels  
Kate Cassidy  
Cecelia Micelli  
Ava Eriksen

- Brett Geffner  
Caroline Gozaloff  
Miikka Nelson  
Colby Holmes  
Samuel Ogunwale
- FITNESS AWARD GOLD**  
Brett Geffner  
Devin Lillis  
Casey Malone  
Brigid Manning  
Nolan May  
Macklin Murtha



- Sarah Newman  
Charlie Sands  
Matthew Sullivan  
Juliet Wessels  
Abbey White  
Natasha Yajadda  
**SILVER**
- Michael Argenziano  
James Bayne  
Connor Cameron  
Kenny Carrao  
Kate Cassidy  
Hailey Dyckman  
Ava Eriksen

- Patrick Folks  
Caroline Gozaloff  
Cole Grandfield  
John Greves  
Caterina Harris  
Colby Holmes  
Isabel Malone  
Tommy Marino  
Luke Marullo  
Patrick McCabe  
Elisa McGuinness  
Cecelia Micelli  
Chad Moccio  
Liam Moynihan

- Mikka Nelson  
Samuel Ogunwale  
Nicole Reina  
Nicholas Romano  
Angelina Sagginario  
Molly Schollenberger  
Timothy Sebor  
Jack Smalley  
William Streek  
Dylan Tomforde  
Gene Wang  
Andrew Watson  
James Willson

Awards continue p. 7.

Continued from page 6. **Cherry Avenue Moving-Up**

When PTA presidents Danielle Watson and Jennifer Wilson made the class presentation later in the ceremony, they explained this year's class gift was the box and its contents for Cherry Avenue students. Following this heartwarming moment was the sentimental journey provided by the slide show.

Ending the program were two musical numbers directed by Kristi Woerner. First, the students sang *For Good*, which was followed by this year's surprise hit (a clever paraphrasing of *It's all About the Bass*), entitled *It's All About the Lockers*, rewritten specifically by Kristi Woerner and Christine Cirillo for this year's Moving-Up classes at all three elementary schools.

(For names of winners, see list below the photos)



**Sunrise Drive**



Welcoming everyone to the ceremony at Sunrise Drive, Principal Rose Castello first invited Middle School Principal Tom Murray to say a few words, then she began her address. "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."

Quoting her favorite baseball player, Jackie Robinson, Mrs. Castello added, "Good character has long been the hallmark at Sunrise Drive." She acknowledged that the students have continually made "an impact on others in their community, the state, the nation, and sometimes, the world," and cited the following examples: the children raised \$15,000 during their annual *Jump Rope for Heart*; the student safety patrols ensured the safe arrival and dismissal of the younger students; student council activities included food collections, planting a garden, running an antibullying campaign, mailing packages to our soldiers, and creating placemats as well as donating funds to the Sayville Soup Kitchen, to name but a few.

"Our goal at Sunrise Drive is to spread kindness one child at a time," Mrs. Castello continued. Recalling what Martin Luther King Jr. once said (*Not everybody can be famous, but everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service*), Mrs. Castello praised the Sunrise Drive students. "We are very proud of our students today who have demonstrated greatness. And we know they will continue to make a difference in the lives of others."

As the ceremony continued, specific awards from local politicians, as well as for achieving academic and physical fitness excellence were announced (see photos below), and after, the classroom teachers called their students by name, one at a time, so each could stand and be recognized. The Moving Up ended with two entertaining musical performances; *All About the Lockers* and *Count On Me* by the students, directed by Mrs. Amy Baron.



**List of Fifth-grade 2014-2015 Presidential Academic, Physical Fitness, and other Award Winners**

**Cherry Avenue**  
continues from p. 6.  
(see above photos: l-r)  
(top) **Triple "C"** • Angelina Sagginario, Matthew Sullivan  
(top) **Kemper Awards** • Francesco Soccoli, Miaria Michaelides  
(middle) **New York State Comptroller** • William Streek, Devin Lillis, Sarah Newman  
(middle) **Executive Public Service Award** • Juliette Wessels  
(bottom) **County Legislature Presiding Officer** • Gabriella Meza  
(bottom) **Cherry Good Choice Award** • Miles Cataldo  
(bottom) **Cameron Riccomini Scholarship Award** • Kenneth Corrao

**Sunrise Drive**  
**ACADEMIC GOLD AWARDS**  
Joseph Benedetto  
Evan Como  
Ava Gross  
Sarah Hinteman  
Jordan Messina  
Kerry O'Donoghue  
Alayna Pavao  
Jack Quinlan  
James Tripptree  
Kristin Vahle  
**SILVER AWARDS**  
Callaghan Babcock  
Noelle Bartolotta  
Zachary Beach  
Jayden Dillon

**Matthew Faraci**  
**Jenna Johnson**  
**Anthony Mesi**  
**Catherine Meyers**  
**Joseph Moosa**  
**Olivia Osterloh**  
**Sarah Ramsundar**  
**Allison Reilly**  
**Reese Skelly**  
**Samuel Smith**  
**Brooke Wilkens**  
**FITNESS AWARD GOLD**  
**Kerry O'Donoghue**  
**Jillian Rastello**  
**Allison Reilly**  
**Yirdaw Rivera**  
**Reese Skelly**  
**James Tripptree**

**SILVER**  
**Catherine Meyers**  
**Brendan O'Rourke**  
**Alayna Pavao**  
**Shannon Phelan**  
**Jack Quinlan**  
**Samantha Salvia**  
**Samuel Smith**  
**Brooke Wilkens**  
**Christopher Zafonte**  
(see above photos: clockwise l-r)  
**Suffolk County NY State Comptroller** • Alayna Pavao, Karah Castagna  
**Triple "C"** • Francis Puccio, Yirdaw Rivera

**County Legislature Presiding Officer**  
**Jordan Messina**  
**Triple "R"** • Kylie Flanagan  
**Executive Public Service Award (Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone)** • Riley Mercorella



# "Young Men and Women" Move Up in Middle School Class of 2015

Two hundred forty-nine Eighth-graders processed into the auditorium for their Moving-Up Ceremony, while the Seventh-grade Orchestra played the march. Once all had



assembled, the program opened with the National Anthem, sung a capella by the amazing Samantha LoGrippe (left) whose performance brought roars of approval and applause from the audience.

During his address, Principal Thomas Murray expressed his great privilege to be celebrating the accomplishments of the Moving-Up students. Along with enumerating the class statistics (see below), he praised them for their outstanding attributes. "What I have come to admire the most about this class is the fine young men and women you have become. Wherever you have traveled as a class you have always made people feel welcomed and loved. You have left your handprint of love, compassion, courage, joy, and integrity."

With quotes from Thomas

Edison (*Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time*) as an incentive for them never to give up on the challenges they will face at the high school, and Ronald Reagan (*Each generation goes further than the generation preceding it because it stands on the shoulders of that generation*) to remind the students that others "continue to sacrifice so that you may have a world of endless opportunities," Mr. Murray concluded. "When you walked in here [*three years ago*] you were up to my waist; leaving here, some of you can look me in the eyes...you've grown up into fine young men and women. Sayville Middle School staff, teachers, and myself wish you nothing but the best in the high school and in your future endeavors. Parents and guests, I present to you the Moving-Up Class of 2015 and the future graduating Class of 2019!"



## 2014-2015 8th-GRADE DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

- ALGEBRA** Amy Tomko
- ART 8** Mackenzie Damon
- Studio in Art** Ava Herrera
- BAND** Donald Schweikert
- CHORUS** Samantha LoGrippe
- COMPUTERS** Timothy McNamara
- CONSUMER/FAMILY SCIENCE** Bettina Bonfiglio
- ENGLISH** Nicholas Cameron
- FRENCH** Harrison Bench
- LIFE SCIENCE** Maria Buffardi
- LIVING ENVIRONMENT** Avery Rosado
- MATHEMATICS 8** Russell Rodman
- ORCHESTRA** Avery Rosado
- PHYSICAL ED. (BOYS)** Thomas Nielsen
- PHYSICAL ED. (GIRLS)** Briana Davis
- SOCIAL STUDIES** Abigail Sneddon
- SPANISH** Christian Simpson
- TECHNOLOGY** Bradley Eisner
- Cameron Riccomini Scholarship** Briana Davis
- Erin Halliday-Duffy Sunflower Scholarship** Bettina Bonfiglio, William Bongiorno, Devin Castell, Ava Herrera, & Timothy Kanaley
- NYS Attorney Triple C Award** Cory Cutrone & Sara Holmes
- SC Executive Award** Grace Aversano
- NYS Comptroller's Achievement Award** Sierra Boyce & Avery Rosado

a-thon raising over \$1300 for the Harry Chapin Food Pantry.

### ATHLETICALLY

- Our teams have competed hard and have enjoyed success. There have been many undefeated seasons as well as Section XI Sportsmanship Award winners.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- For the past three years, we have had over 200 Presidential Community Service Winners – serving 10,000 hours of community service
- You raised money to beat cancer; support our soldiers, feed and clothe the needy, and collect toys, making Christmas a little brighter.

### PTA AWARDS

- GIRLS SPORTSMANSHIP SIERRA BOYCE
- BOYS SPORTSMANSHIP KOLBI MADDY
- SCHOOL LEADERSHIP NEDEEM MALIK
- SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SERVICE JILLEEN BARRETT
- ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT MAGDALENA SCHROEDER

**STATISTICS** In this new era of academic rigor, the Moving-Up Class of 2015 has risen to the challenges and have excelled. Out of 249 students:

- 90 students (36% of the class) took the Common Core Algebra Regents—100% passed.
- 86 students took the Living Environment Regents—100% passed; 82 (or 95%) of those 86 received a score at the mastery level.
- 234 students have met the requirements for a high school foreign language credit.
- 83 students have taken and passed the High School Studio In Art Class, which is 33% of the class.
- 98% of the Class is leaving with 1 High School Credit
- 38% of the Class is leaving with 2 High School Credits
- 35% of the Class is leaving with 3 High School Credits

- 37% of the Class has maintained a 90 GPA for 11 marking periods.

### THE ARTS

- Our Music Program has competed around the country. NYSSMA students performed solos receiving top honors. One student was selected to represent Sayville in the Long Island String Festival; eleven were selected for the SCMEA All-County band/chorus/orchestra groups; one was selected for the All-County Jazz festival; fourteen students achieved an A+ rating (*the highest rating*) for their solo performance at this year's NYSSMA solo festival. One student attended the Juilliard School of Music, Music Advancement Program on Saturdays, the Stony Brook Saturday Precollege program, the Children's Orchestra Society, and the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra. The music department participated in a *practice-*

FOR PHOTOS OF MOVING-UP AND LIST OF 2014-2015 PRESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC AWARD RECIPIENTS GO TO TIDINGS ONLINE: CLICK ON THE MOVING-UP LINK FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL



**TIDINGS**  
FROM THE SAYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DR. WALTER F. SCHARTNER,  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
99 Greeley Avenue  
Sayville, New York 11782

LINDA A. MITTIGA  
SAYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER & DISTRICT WEBSITE EDITOR  
\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*\*

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